

SEABIRD REACTIONS TO LOW FLYING AIRCRAFT

Seabirds rest and nest in colonies or large group on offshore rocks and cliffs. Numerous disturbances can lead to colony abandonment.



BRANTS CORMORANT
©ROY LOWE, PRBO

DID YOU KNOW?

One low overflight or repeated disturbances during the breeding season can:

- Scare birds off their nests
- Dislodge eggs or chicks from nest sites
- Allow predators access to eggs and chicks
- Lead to deaths when eggs and chicks are exposed to heat or cold, or chicks leave the nest too soon and drown.

MARINE MAMMALS ARE SENSITIVE TO LOW OVERFLIGHTS TOO!



HARBOR SEALS
©GFNMS

Seals and Sea Lions need to haul out on land to rest and have their young. Disturbances frighten animals, separate mothers and pups, and can lead to trampling and death.



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Circling planes can disturb whales and dolphins as they rest and feed at the surface.

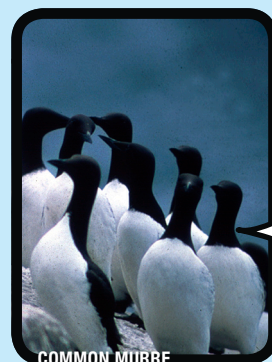
DID YOU KNOW?

Low overflights can kill seabirds

The noise and shadow of a low flying aircraft can cause seabirds to panic and fly, abandoning their eggs and chicks. This results in the deaths of chicks and declining populations.

WHY IS THIS A PROBLEM?

Seabird populations are much lower than historic counts. For example the number of Common Murre on the Farallon Islands has plummeted in the last century, from **1-3 million** down to about **250,000!**



COMMON MURRE
©GFNMS

A 3 year US Fish and Wildlife Service study off the coast of California found that 96% of flights below 1000' AGL caused disturbance to seabird colonies, including the deaths of chicks!

Hey pal,
I'm tryin to
nest here!

FLY SEABIRD SAFE

Low overflights can be very hazardous to planes!

Birdstrikes cause severe plane damages costing more than \$600 million every year in the United States.



Protect yourself and seabirds...
maintain **2000' AGL** while
flying along the coast!

SEABIRD PROTECTION NETWORK

“The goal of the network is to reduce human disturbance to wildlife”

Using restoration funds from the prosecution of the oil tanker the *Command*, the network focusses on education and outreach as a tool to manage the impacts that pilots and other coast users have on nesting seabirds.

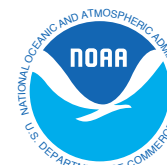
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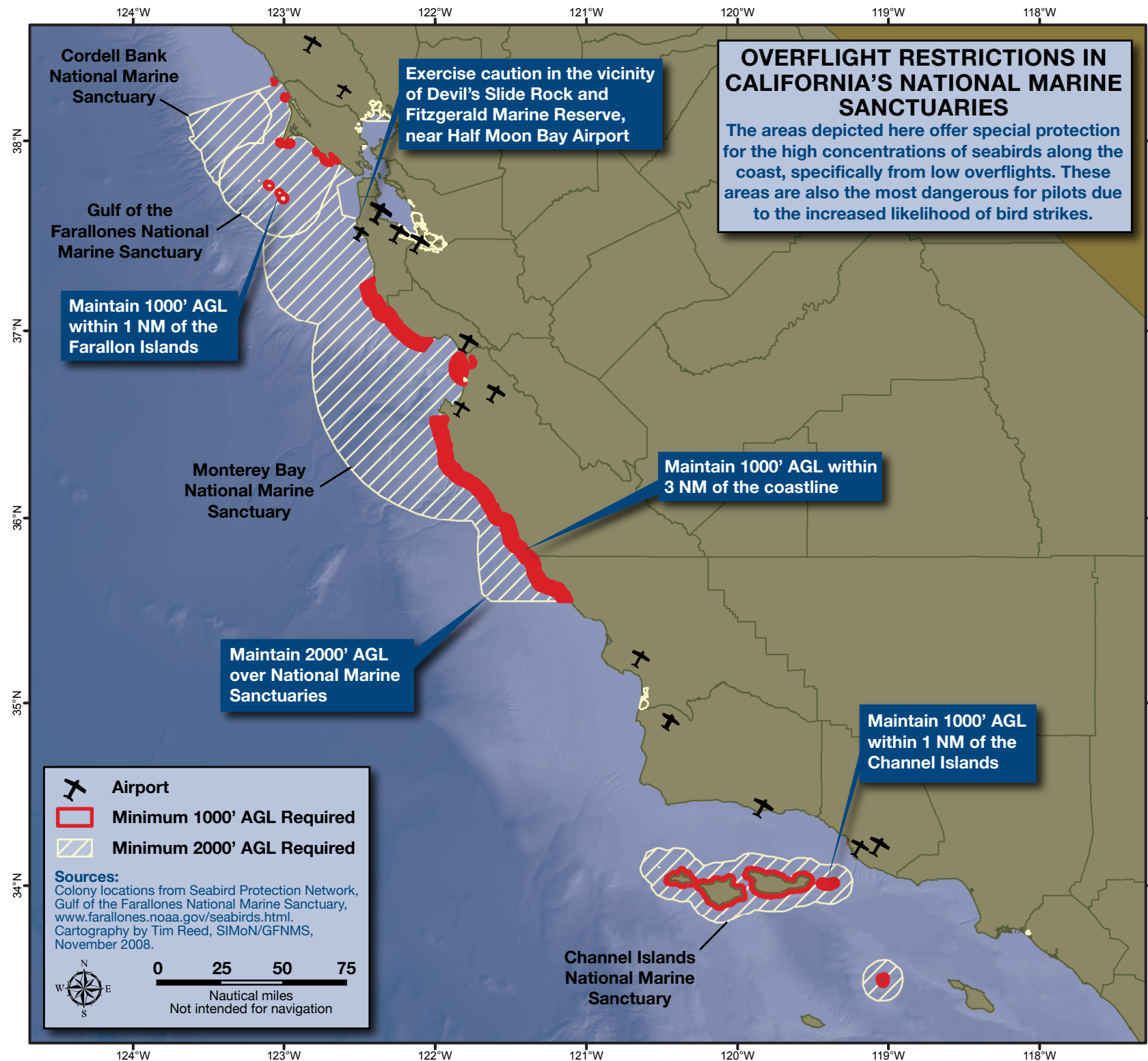
california.seabird@noaa.gov

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.farallones.noaa.gov/seabirds.html

- Free posters and pilot guides
- Information on special presentations for flight clubs, certified flight instructors, or flight schools
- Maps and information on laws and regulations
- Join the network and become Seabird Safe Certified





FLY SEABIRD SAFE

FOLLOW SAFETY LAWS & GUIDELINES THAT PROTECT SEABIRDS AND PILOTS FROM HARM

1 MAINTAIN 2000' AGL

Follow the recommended altitudes and maintain **2000'AGL within National Marine Sanctuaries.** Know the law and obey where NOAA regulations require **1000' AGL along the coast.**

2 NO DIRECT FLYOVERS OR MULTIPLE PASSES

Do not fly directly over or make multiple passes over areas where sensitive wildlife are located, such as seabird colonies and marine mammal haul outs. Disturbing wildlife is against the law.

3 REPORT VIOLATIONS TO NOAA HOTLINE

If you see someone violating the rules and flying too low, **record the tail number** and call the NOAA enforcement hotline at **1-800-853-1964.**

4 BECOME SEABIRD SAFE CERTIFIED

Join the Seabird Protection Network. Pledge to follow the recommendations and receive special partner benefits!

To join, email us: **california.seabirds@noaa.gov**
Or visit: **www.farallones.noaa.gov/seabirds.html**

